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FM AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 9212
INFO RUEHTA/AMEMBASSY ALMATY 9570
RUEHAH/AMEMBASSY ASHGABAT 1060
RUEHEK/AMEMBASSY BISHKEK 3774
RUEHLM/AMEMBASSY COLOMBO 0880
RUEHKA/AMEMBASSY DHAKA 1608
RUEHDBU/AMEMBASSY DUSHANBE
RUEHBUL/AMEMBASSY KABUL 6059
RUEHKT/AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU 6996
RUEHNE/AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI 9175
RUEHNT/AMEMBASSY TASHKENT 1744
RUEHKP/AMCONSUL KARACHI 2572
RUEHLH/AMCONSUL LAHORE 9960
RUEHPW/AMCONSUL PESHAWAR 7944

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TAGS: [PK](#) [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [KTER](#)

SUBJECT: DEATH OF NAWAB BUGTI CONTINUES TO ROIL THE
STREETS, POLITICAL ARENA

REF: A. (A) ISLAMABAD 16944

[1](#)B. (B) ISLAMABAD 17014

Classified By: CHARGE D'AFFAIRES PETER W. BODDE, REASON 1.4 (B) AND (D)

[1](#)1. (C) SUMMARY: Protests over the government's killing of Baloch leader Nawab Akbar Khan Bugti continued into the third day, August 29. Demonstrations, road blockages, riots and even several bombings appear to have been in reaction to the Nawab's death. The apparent inability of the government to produce the body -- or those of the Nawab's relatives who might have died with him, gave the popular demonstrations impetus, while politicians became increasingly concerned over the death of one of their own, even one in open revolt against the central and provincial government. END SUMMARY.

[1](#)2. (C) Street protests over the death of Nawab Bugti continue across his home province of Balochistan. On Tuesday, rioting broke out following a memorial service held in the provincial capital Quetta. About 10,000 people attended the service and shots and stone throwing erupted after prayers. Stores and two banks were looted and then torched. Reports of grenade throwing and attacks on government buildings across the town continued until police and Frontier Corps elements were able to restore calm. Three bombs exploded in Quetta and Mastung and a bomb in the coastal city of Hub ripped through a hotel, killing perhaps five and wounding nearly a dozen. Riots and looting were also reported in Khuzdar, Turbat and Gwadar. In contrast, a similar memorial service in Karachi was a non-event, with 150-200 present at the Pakistan Press Club and no violence or demonstrations associated with the ceremony. The press reported that sporadic violence and police activity occurred on Tuesday in interior Sindh, but the bulk of the action appears to have been in Balochistan. Consulates in Lahore and Karachi reported no significant activities on Wednesday.

[1](#)3. (C) The government continues to refine its story of Bugti's death. On Tuesday, Major General Shaukat Sultan, Director General, Inter-Services Public Relations, explained to the press that Bugti was not, as reported, traced through his cell phone, but rather that army forces entered the cave after a surveillance helicopter was fired upon from the ground. He said that army officers entered the cave to speak with Bugti once they realized he was inside. As soon as the

officers entered the cave there was a huge explosion and the cave collapsed, killing, among others, the army officers. Sultan added that the cave was very unstable and that retrieving the bodies by hand would take another three to five days.

¶4. (C) The political classes have criticized the government's handling of Bugti's death. Even elements of the ruling coalition have expressed opposition and sorrow over the way the Nawab's case was closed (ref B). Senator Mian Raza Rabbani, leader of the opposition and the Deputy Secretary of the Pakistan People's Party (PPP) told PolOff there was a trans-party apprehension over what the death might imply for Pakistani politicians who might oppose any particular government.

¶4. (C) COMMENT: The government appears to have been caught somewhat off guard by the strong reaction in Balochistan and among the political class to Bugti's death. Their desire to downplay the situation is indicated, in part, by their not making much of the funerals of the officers who died in the incident. Those who die in action are usually honored as national heroes. END COMMENT.

¶5. (U) Consulates Karachi and Lahore contributed to this report.
BODDE